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N.L. Mikidenko, S.P. Storozheva

Siberian State University Of Telecommunications And Information Sciences,
86, Kirovstreet, Novosibirsk, 630102, Russian Federation
e-mail: nl_nsk@sibsutis.ru, s.storozheva@sibsutis.ru

URBAN SPACE IN ANIMATION: IMAGES OF SOCIAL SPACE

Abstract: Animation as a phenomenon of the mass culture is more often becoming an object of research interest, as it gives us wide facilities to represent values, characters, plots, and images. In research animation films are a way to consign culture values, experience and worldview. Animation plots are a set in social space that can be defined as urban or nonurban, and the visual text of animated film is used to consider the dynamics of urban space as a cultural landscape and the development tendencies of the city. Urban space is sociable, and its representation allows eliciting the estimations of a city as a type of culture. Beholding urban space in animation is based on the idea of a city as a social space. Perception and outlining social space are studied by U.M. Lotman's research. Based on the analysis of a visual range of animated films, an attempt to characterize the dynamic images of the city and urban space and tendencies of changing the attitude to urban space is made. The research methods include defining an animated film as a visual document that shows us resistant cultural images and social relations and represent P. Shtompka's interest and A. Usmanova's ideas. A visual range of an animated film is reflecting the localization of a character in urban space – a centre or countryside; it shows the type of housing, brings the marks in connection with a plot development, actions of a character, positive and negative acts, which are shown in the plot of an animated film and having a space localisation. Beholding different historical and cultural plots give us an opportunity to follow the dynamics of urban space estimations in the culture, all in all, changing in fashion tendencies in the attitude to the city lifestyle. Animation allows us to project the desired changes in the urban space, show us real images as well as imaginary stories of the urban space. Using the methods of a comparative urban analysis of the visual range allows us following the tendencies of the city development.

Keywords: urban space, animation, representation of urban space.

The urban in the focus of multicultural researches

The dynamics of sociocultural processes makes urban problems relevant and interesting for researchers. From the very beginning, the city has been a space of different things such as authorities, economics, population, information and it has played an important role in the development of social space. In the modern society under the influence of the spectrum of different processes (such as urbanization, technological development, migration and globalization, changing the image of the cities), the city is becoming the predominant trend in the organization of people's lifestyle and activities.

When the modern cities faced the challenges of globalism and multiculturalism, figurative expression by O.I. Vendina "the arena of communications" appeared (Vendina, 2016). The author emphasizes that the city "is distinguished not only by the nature of construction and functions, but also by a higher population density, heterogeneity of its composition, diversity of life forms, the intensity of contacts and "own" identity – a sense of belonging to a special community. The larger the city is, the more complex its structure and the more cores consolidation of different groups of interests are. These differences are enhanced by the value, language, ethnic, religious and life-style diversity" (Vendina, 2016). New conditions of urban development actualize the search for mechanisms of consolidating urban communities and representing the city as a lifestyle.

Methodology

Describing the phenomenon of urban space, the authors rely on the work by R. Park (Park, 2002), researcher from the Chicago school, the interpretation of urban studies by E.G. Trubina and the description of methodological strategies of modern urban methodology by N.P. Koptseva, E. A. Sertakova (Koptseva, Sertakova, 2015).

The visualization of the culture has identified the problem of finding methods to study visual texts. Visual text research in the conditions of the culture visualization is becoming increasingly important. In determining the methods of studying animated films as visual documents, reflecting not only the author's preferences, but also stable cultural patterns, social interactions and relationships are interesting ideas by P. Sztompka (Sztompka, 2007), A.R. Usmanova (Usmanov, 2007), V.L. Krutkin (Krutkin, 2007), E.R. Yarskaya-Smirnova (Yarskaya-Smirnova, 2007). A number of authors emphasize the importance of studying visual texts by an interpretative content analysis as "a systematic study of objects (artifacts) or events through quantitative methods and/or interpretation of their content. In these visual anthropological texts, studying a particular cultural artifact, movies, pictures, exhibitions have become artifacts themselves. The visual language of a reflexive object itself becomes a cultural product" (Koptseva, Il'beikina, 2014). Visual texts of the modern culture in the broader sense reflect the whole range of social relations, everyday practices and individual experience, which makes them a valuable evidence of the century.

One more aspect of visual texts' importance in the urban space research is that a city is considered as a sociocultural phenomenon in terms of the phenomenological approach, N.P. Koptseva, E.A. Sertakova note, considering that "researchers' interest should be directed on discovering the mechanisms of perception and behaviour in person's relations with sociocultural urban space, and more specifically, the image of the city that generates them" (Koptseva, Sertakova, 2015).

To study the images of the city in animation, the methods of comparative urbanism, analysis of the visual series, semiotics have been used that allow us to consider the urban space through the appeal artworks, such as animated films. "You can study the city through the research of artistic images, the material for which are the plots of the city, presented in paintings and graphic artworks, small plastic, decorative and applied art" (Sertakova, 2014). This method justifies itself, because in the artworks are "not so much the author's individualism is reproduced, as the general cultural and universal aspirations of the whole society" (Sertakova, 2014).

Using the content analysis of feature animated films visual range the authors try to characterize the dynamics of the city images, urban environment and the trends of changes in the representation of urban space.

Analyzing the visual range of the city animated images, the authors try to answer a number of questions: what images of urban space are presented in animated films: real or imaginary cities; cities of the past, present or future; a type of a city: a small or large city; a type of urban space: the city center or periphery; the city as a place of daily life, as a place of rest, as a place of work; whether the opposition of space is revealed: the city-not-city; what features the urban space has; what markers are used to represent urban space; what events take place in urban space, and what assessments are received by the actions of the characters in urban space.

Urban spaces in the animated films: definition of the research problem

Animation as a phenomenon of the mass culture is increasingly becoming an object of cultural scientists, sociologists, art historians, psychologists, and academics' research interest. Modern animation provides ample opportunities for representation of values, characters, subjects and images that reflect the cultural diversity of the world. Being an integral part of culture, animation opens up opportunities for studying its material and spiritual components. In the framework of culture sociology animated films have been studied by A.M. Gracheva (Gracheva, 2000), M.A. Eletskaya (Eletskaya, 1998), N.D. Krivuley (Krivulya, 2010), E.A. Medvedeva (Medvedeva,

2006), O.A. Romanova (Romanova, 2010), V.S. Sobkin (Sobkin, 2010) and others. Various aspects of animation have been discussed in the framework of scientific and practical conferences "Animation as a cultural phenomenon" held by the Russian State Institute of Cinematography named after S.A. Gerasimova since 2006 where both art history issues of theory and history of animation as well as and a wide range of animation history issues, the features of national schools are discussed; animation is considered as a way to transfer cultural values, experience, worldviews. Exploring animation as a cultural phenomenon, N.G. Krivulya offers to analyze animated films in terms of broadcasting certain ideas, cultural, moral, value settings.

Visual twist in the modern culture offers researchers to pay attention to visual images that participate in socialization and affect the formation of ideas, tastes, and lifestyle. In the study of Yandex-search it is noted that "almost 10% of the weekly search audience is looking for cartoons", "only in a week search there are about 10 thousand different cartoons — full-length and short ones, series and individual series, for children and for adults, from several dozen countries" (In search of cartoons, 2016) that indicates the huge impact the animation has on the modern viewers. A.F. Laletina actualizes the view of the cartoon as an "active carrier of culture, forming the culture of the younger generation", because a child is able to interact with it independently (Laletina, 2009). The influence of animation on the audience's performances is studied primarily in the pedagogical aspect, where the problems of children's TV viewing, educational function of cartoons are considered; it is emphasized that an animated film is no longer only a children's genre. M.V. Romashova notes that "behind the" frivolous "genre, designed, seemingly, for a specific age audience, there is not only a specific artistic language and aesthetics, but also a system of education, the mechanism of integrating children into the society, finally, the way of life and daily practices of adults and children" (Romashova, 2011).

The possibilities of animation in the formation of the attitude to life in general and in the aspect of attitude towards work in particular is referred to in the materials published on the "Delovoy Kvartal" web-site, where the results of Whether Buchanan's investigation devoted to the cartoon made by the Walt Disney company are given. The attention is drawn to the fact that "pop culture in general and Disney's in particular could lay ... negative perceptions about the motives and actions of managers. ... Children are given the following message: expect a rude attitude as soon as you get a job. Those who is already ambitious as a child, learn another lesson: companies succeed bully. They are constantly looking at painted leaders who act aggressively and powerfully, and see them as people who have achieved something" (Leigh Buchanan, 2018). Thus, cartoons can form an attitude to certain social phenomena at an early age, for example, to the world of work and organizational culture.

Urban space and its social representation allow identifying the views of the city as a type of culture. The consideration of urban space in the animation is based on the ideas of the city as a social space, which are formulated by P. Sorokin, developed in the modern social theory in the works by P. Bourdieu, A. Lefevre (Lefevr, 2010), as well as in the works by the domestic researcher A.F. Filippov (Filippov, 2008). Topic modeling of social space in art and the possibilities of using art to understand ideas about the world and the world order, peculiar to different eras and cultures presented in the research by Y.M. Lotman, who believes that "semiotics of space is extremely important, if not dominant, role in the establishment of the world picture of a particular culture", "spatial language can Express non-spatial representations", such as meanings, values, evaluation and representation of the people (Lotman, 1999). For example, different cultural-historical types and works of art interpreted the problems of space in the works by M.I. Sviderskaya (Svidersky, 1997), E.S. Steiner (Steiner, 1999). These authors, on the example of architecture and other spatial arts of different eras and regions, analyze the ideas about the world and the world order, characteristics of different stages of culture, expressed through the interaction of arts.

The relationship between the human and the spatial image of the world is complex and diverse. "On the one hand, this image is created by a man and on the other — he actively forms a

person immersed in it" (Lotman, 1999). Continuing Y.M. Lotman's idea, G.S. Knabe believes that "any fact of art, any fact of culture that has acquired a material form and lasts in it, exists in the act of perception; at the heart of the act of perception and evaluation of the perceived is what psychologists call identification: the experience of the perceived as "one's", as that is also in me and continues me, and therefore is with me in a relationship "we" or, on the contrary, assumes a repulsion from the upcoming me in the act of perception as "someone else", as from some "they", in relation to me external" (Knabe, 2006).

Animated stories are set in a specific social space that can be defined as urban or non-urban, and the visual range of the animated film can be used to consider the dynamics of the assessment of the urban environment as a cultural and social space and trends in the development of the city.

Viewers about urban animation: selection and evaluation of animated narrative of the urban representation

The authors have used quantitative and qualitative strategies of sociological research to analyze the city's representation in animated films. The quantitative strategy has been used to assess the audience's attitude to animated films. The qualitative strategy has been used to identify the selection preferences and evaluation of animated scenes representing the space of the city.

The sociological survey method, devoted to identifying the characteristics of the cartoon audience has been conducted by the authors in two waves among the students of Novosibirsk, the Russian Federation, in 2016 (241 respondents) and 2018 (205 respondents). The respondents, students of engineering and technology, computer science, social sciences and the humanities took part in the survey. Respondents were undergraduate students of different years of study (1st, 2nd and 3rd), 63% of these were male students and 37% were female students.

On the question "Do you watch cartoons?", over 90% of respondents said "Yes". The vast majority of the respondents (88% and 89% in 2016 and 2018 accordingly) agreed with the opinion that the animation – "This is an art for people of any age", and only 7% chose the answer – "The art for preschool and primary school." The comparison of answers is presented in Table 1.

Table

Comparing the audience ratings of animated films (%)

The questions asked to viewers of animated films		The distribution of answers	
		2016 (%)	2018 (%)
Do you watch animated films?	Yes	90,9	92,7
	No	9,1	7,3
Do you agree with the opinion that animation is an art for people of all ages?		88	89
Do you agree with the opinion that animation is an art for primary school and reschoolers?		5,4	6,8

Despite the fact that different audiences of respondents were interviewed, the distribution of answers to those questions at different stages of the survey did not change. This allows us to talk about the mass and universality of animation as a genre of art and its impact on the mass audience in modern culture.

In the study of the audience's perception of cities in animation, students and senior students have been asked to write an essay; they have been asked to choose an animated film, where the plot is inscribed in the urban space and describe the city that is shown in the cartoon. More than 100 essays have been received.

One of the problems that arise in the selection of animated films as a source of ideas about the city images is the definition of the research empirical base, its differentiation by chronological and spatial characteristics. One example of such typology has been proposed by Yandex-search researchers, who in April 2016 conducted an analysis of search queries dedicated to animated films. As a result, three large groups have been identified: full-length Disney and Pixar cartoons, Soviet cartoons and anime. These groups differ not only in the place of their creation, but also in

the audience who are interested in watching these cartoons. Audiences of these groups of animated films, according to the researchers, almost do not intersect with each other, the image of a kind of "universes" (in search of cartoons, 2016). It is also noted that "most of the popular cartoons are American, the second place is Japan, and the Soviet and Russian cartoons, respectively, are on the third and fourth places." However, it is emphasized that "if you look not at the number of cartoons, but at their audience, the picture changes a little: the Russian cartoons rise to the second place – primarily thanks to the series about Masha and the Bear, and Canada and the UK increase their shares at the expense of blockbusters" "Puppy patrol" and "Peppa Pig". The popularity of feature-length cartoons has changed quite quickly usually looking for more what goes on in the movie (In search of cartoons, 2016).

These groups of cartoons were revealed in the study conducted by the authors in 2018, in the quantitative analysis of the cartoons that were selected by the respondents, where the condition was determined - "there is an image of the city and urban space." The distribution of cartoons by groups according to the country of origin is shown in Figure.

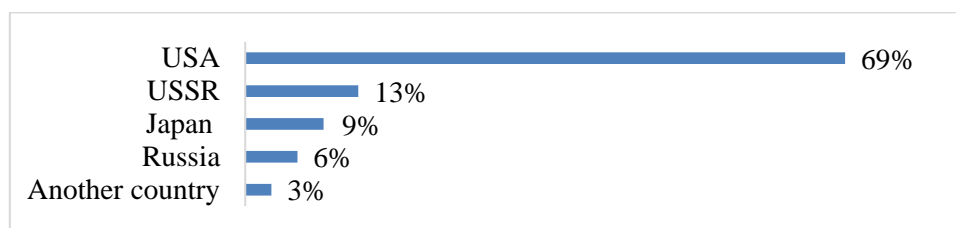


Figure. Distribution of animated films used to describe representations of urban space by country of production (% of named movies)

The most frequently selected animated film about the city was "Zveropolis" (USA, 2016), the audience noted the diversity of urban space structures, city areas and ways of their connection, social stratification of urban space, problems of self-realization in the city.

As markers of urban space, the audience considered "multi-storey houses, wide streets, schools, shops" ("Crocodile Gena and Cheburashka", 1969, USSR) (RZ:13); "a large number of vehicles rushing through the wide asphalt streets, the station, the subway and the stadium. ... shops, advertising posters" ("Uncle Stepan the policeman", 1964, USSR) (RZ:13); "trains, large buildings, modern cars and cars of the future. Residents are used to such a fast and advanced life, dominated by modern technologies" ("Zeropolis", USA, 2016) (RZ:10); "many skyscrapers, research centers, with a lot of technological innovations" ("Phineas and Ferb", animated series, USA) (RZ:9); "the turbulent life of the city .. metro, cars, trams ... " ("Well, wait!", begin 1969, USSR, Russia, animated series) (RZ:12); "a large number of vehicles, little vegetation, the constant bustle " ("Madagascar", 2005, USA) (RZ: 13); "skyscrapers, new, modern buildings, houses, hotels, business centers, shops, pubs, restaurants, clubs, cinemas, schools, kindergartens, hospitals, airports, ...advertising banners, along the roads, on billboards, electronic billboards on buildings, shops attract ... advertising" ("Horse Bodzhek", 2014, USA) (RK:70); "within the city limits there is a nuclear power plant, a Church, two primary schools, several museums, a lower League baseball team, an airport, a huge tire dump (which has been burning for 35 years) and many other attractions" ("The Simpsons", begin 1989, an animated series, USA) (RK:56); "the city's markers are the city Park, beach, monuments, ...the branch line.....is the expressway " ("Hey, Arnold!", 1996, USA) (RK:61).

The city according to the audience creates a special sense of space that the audience convey in the following sensations and images: "a lot of cars and people set the rhythm of the city" ("Zveropolis", 2016, USA) (RK:57); "a lot of people, all doing something, somewhere in a hurry, sometimes not noticing anything around him" ("Crocodile Gena and Cheburashka", "Uncle Stepan the policeman", 1964, USSR) (RZ:13); "in the city it is difficult to live alone in" ("Return of the prodigal parrot", 1984, USSR) (RZ:9).

A feature of Japanese animation in the description of the city in the views of the audience is the relationship of the nature and attributes of urban space. "The main markers of the urban environment are not only familiar (markers) houses, shops, cars... in any picture of the nature can be an urban object – traffic lights, wires, rails, cars, roads – and did not spoil it" ("Five centimeters per second", 2007, Japan). This animated film can really be called urban. L. Wirth has highlighted the special characteristics of urban space: increased anonymity of communication, reducing the social role of the family, reducing the role of traditions, weakening social solidarity and social control, the instability of status and mobility of the individual, the feeling of loneliness in an indifferent world". All these features of urban space can be seen in the last part of the anime "Five centimeters per second", when we see the city where lonely Takaki lives" (RK: 55); "...the city ... is a big and noisy city, but at the same time it has its own charm... it is big and noisy, located on the beach,... a lot of people walking through the busy streets, cars moving in a constant stream, ... not frightened... but ...gave the feeling of full of life... the city, which is a combination of restlessness and calm. People are always in a hurry somewhere, but they are always in a good mood, which helps to fill the city with warmth and comfort" ("Witch delivery service", 1989, Japan) (RK:89).

In the Soviet and Russian animation the city is realistic, in its image there are no mystical features, signs of social inequality and spatial differentiation: "the same type sleeping areas of the Soviet cities-millionaires. Most of the buildings are multi-storey, rarely one-storey. Urban space is as close to the heroes as possible" (RK:88).

The modern Russian animation in full-length paintings refers to the images of historical cities: "a Huge, beautiful stone city – Tsargrad... ..the well-developed infrastructure of this city, picturesque fountains, properly designed streets, a road paved with cobblestone pavement, extensive terraces connected with marble stairs, all this beautifully flows into the landscape design and emphasizes the beauty and splendor of this city" ("Ilya Muromets and the Nightingale the Robber", 2007, Russia) (RK:58).

Urban community and signs of urban space, convenient to live in has been described by the audience in the following way:"...The city has its own celebrations and events for residents, ... significant dates... trusting relationships that exist between the child and the urban environment" ("Hey, Arnold!", 1996, USA) (RK:61); "all within walking distance... A small town, fresh air and lots of greenery and vegetation" ("Spongebob Squarepants", 1999, USA) (RK: 60); "Busy streets, planted with trees, beautiful buildings, that's what fills this ... city" ("Ratatouille", 2007, USA) (RK: 68); "colorful new houses, (and). houses are not urban, and cottages and ordinary houses in the heart of the city that are endowed with its own beauty. It is a big city on the one hand, where there are theaters, ... shops, playgrounds and a lot of entertainment, and on the other, ... small, (where) everyone ... knows each other in person, maintain good relationships and help each other in difficult situations. ...across the city trees and flowers are planted... modern cars..." ("Sing", USA, 2016) (RK: 69).

Problems of cities: "endless dusty ruins" ("9", 2009, Germany, USA) (RZ:13); the problem of "stone jungle".... and tolerance for each other". ("Zeropolis", 2016, USA) (RK:62); "a huge number of super-intelligent/super-incompetent robots, such as homeless or juvenile robots robots are orphans. Usually they are quite lazy and rude and often do not want to help their creators-people. (residents) do not want to know anything about the old city" ("Futurama", USA, 1999) (RK:66). The research of the choice and evaluation of animated scenes reflecting the representation of the city by the audience allows us to say that the audience notices and rationalizes the images of the urban space reflected in the animated films, identifies markers of urban space. This allows us to consider animation as a source of reflecting the ideas about urban spaces and as one of the artistic languages of the city description with its special properties of narrative description of the reality.

Conclusion

Considering the languages of a city description, V.S. Vakhstein notes several stable narratives of the city; each of them is distinguished by its axiomatics, optics and metaphors (Vakhstein, 2014). The modernist narrative of high urbanism considers the city as a machine of economic growth and development. The second language of thinking about the city is formed in the later modernism and it is defined as "left urbanism". The third metaphor of the city becomes "hipster urbanism" that turns the urban space into a stage, the city is no longer a machine, but a stage, it "paints fences in bright colors and installs garbage sorting containers on every corner", turns "abandoned industrial zones" into "hotbeds of social life". "Modernist urbanism is investing into skyscrapers and hawthorn, leftist urbanism into slum electrification, public transport system and the development of local communities, hipster urbanism – in cycle lanes, pedestrian areas and parks" (Vakhstein, 2014).

Animated films are one of the languages of describing urban space arrangements. Urban space is reflected in a variety of modern animated films. They present all three proposed narratives of urbanism

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